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A Study of the Paths of Secondary Degeneration in a Case of Injury of the Cervical Spine. A. V. MEIGS, M. D. The Am. Journ. of the Med. Sciences. Aug. 1890. III Plates.

A blow on the back of the head and neck of a sailor caused loss of sensation and motion below the level of the clavicles. The patient died twenty-six days after admission to the hospital. The autopsy showed neither luxation nor fracture of the spine, but a small extra-dural hemorrhage into the spinal canal at the level of the seventh cervical vertebra. Specimens of the cord were taken from a little above this point and as far down as the lumbar region. The hardening was in Müller's fluid, and the staining, by carmine, Weigert's hæmatoxylin and Schultze's palladium and carmine method. This last was found to bring out an incipient stage of degeneration which the Weigert's hæmatoxylin did not reveal. At the level of greatest destruction (about the seventh cervical) the transverse myelitis appeared to involve the entire section, except the dorsal portion of the dorsal columns, and some peripheral parts of the ventro-lateral column on the right side. On completion of the hardening, the cord was examined macroscopically and the color markings used to locate the paths of degeneration. When, however, the paths thus located are compared with the indications from the microscopical examination, so much discrepancy is found that any direct inference from the one to the other is plainly unreliable at present. The macroscopic color changes are significant, but according to this account the possibilities of that significance have yet to be elaborated. The author calls attention to the distribution of the degeneration above and below the level of greatest disturbance. For example, above the level the dorsal columns are involved, whereas they appear normal at the point of the initial lesion. Below this level a region which appears to be that of the crossed pyramidal fibres is involved throughout the extent of the cord, but appears to have a less area in the mid-thoracic than at the levels above and below this. The peculiarity of this result is contrasted with the usual observation that as we pass from above downwards a lesion of this bundle gradually decreases until it fades out. For this appearance the author is inclined to fall back on some explanation other than the usual one, but for this and the several stages of degeneration in which the fibres were found, the reader is referred to the original.

The Presence of Ranvier's Constrictions in the Spinal Cord of Vertebrates
Dr. W. M. T. PORTER, Quart. Journ. Micros. Sci., Feb. 1890, 1 pl.

The author worked at Kiel in the laboratory of Prof. Flemming. The problem of the presence of the nodes of Ranvier in the fibres of the spinal cord was tested by him with silver, osmic, using the method of teasing and sections, on the cords of the rabbit, guinea-pig and ox, and nodes were satisfactorily demonstrated in all these animals, as his drawings show. The technical difficulties are apparently considerable and neither the distribution in the cord of any one animal nor in any large series of vertebrates was followed out, the author showing simply that the constrictions do exist in that locality in the animals named and that, as these fibres have no sheath of Schwann, the formation of these constrictions must be independent of that structure. Here and there since 1875 the existence of these constrictions in the spinal cord has been maintained, but the evidence here given appears to be the strongest that has yet been advanced. (The existence of these constrictions would harmonize with the "collateral" nerve branches of Ramon y Cajal, since they would give points at which these collaterals might leave the main fibre, thus bringing this new case under the law of branching as observed in the peripheral nerves. REV.